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Report on Strategic Warning

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Chairman

DIA and DOS review(s) completed.

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27 February 1967

The Honorable Richard Helms
Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dick:

In accordance with President Kennedy's letter to Mr. McCone dated 16 January 1962 and the Director's letter to the Secretary of Defense dated 12 December 1963, your Deputy for National Intelligence Programs Evaluation asked me, with appropriate staff assistance, to study in depth the performance, planning, present and foreseeable future problems of the U.S. intelligence community in carrying out its Early Warning mission. That mission is defined in the Charter of the United States Intelligence Board (USIB) Watch Committee (DCID 1/5 of 23 April 1965) as follows:

To provide the U.S. Intelligence Board with the earliest possible intelligence warning of, and continuing judgment on, Soviet Bloc and Chinese intentions to engage in aggressive action by regular or irregular armed forces.

In the course of my survey, I have extensively reviewed the present capabilities of information systems and intelligence organizations contributing to Early Warning and have attempted to anticipate and outline future trends, problems and improvements in warning matters which the intelligence community should expect in the years ahead. My report is submitted herewith.

My work has been invaluable assisted by the fine cooperation and true professional competence of a large number of dedicated intelligence officers throughout the intelligence community, both in the Washington area and in the field. I have had the benefit of a number of special studies and memoranda prepared for me and many detailed and excellent briefings on a host of subjects related to strategic warning in the Washington area and in the field, at home and abroad.

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I hope the Report will accomplish two purposes. The first is to set forth for you and the other members of the U.S. Intelligence Board my analysis of the manner in which the U.S. warning intelligence machinery is organized and operating, the strengths and limitations of that machinery and certain problems confronting it. The second purpose is to present for study and decision my estimate of the problems which the warning effort may well face in the next years and my action recommendations and suggestions for dealing with them.

The problems in the area of warning intelligence are not simple. The target--enemy hostile intent, concealed as best the enemy can--is elusive. The multi-agency and service structure of the intelligence community complicates the tasks of collecting and assessing the vast flow of bits and pieces. Much of what I recommend calls for further study in the several areas of the warning effort. For background information for you and for those who may participate in any such studies, I submit separately my treatment in some depth of the various intelligence collection resources which do or can contribute to warning (Annexes A to E) and the various processes for extracting warning intelligence from those sources (Annexes F to J).

The Report itself consists of background material and conclusions required for perspective (I); analysis of indications intelligence and its appropriate role in the intelligence community (II); a summary of the detailed treatment in the several annexes of the discussion of warning sources and warning processes (III); comment on warning costs and on the problem of delivery of the end product to the customers--the national decision makers (IV); and, finally, my recommendations for improvement (V).

Without attempting to summarize those recommendations, I do emphasize here the need for you and for USIB to study and take action on the present and imminent problems of the warning effort in various segments of the intelligence community.

Whether the recommendations and suggestions of this Report are precisely correct in every detail is not of great concern. Of vital interest to the United States is the task of ensuring that the problems outlined in the Report be carefully studied and that appropriate solutions be determined and carried out by the members of the intelligence community. The Report may gather dust; the problems must not.

Respectfully submitted,

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SECTION I

Background and Conclusions

1. Strategic warning is one of the most important responsibilities of the Director of Central Intelligence and of the U.S. Intelligence Board. Timely warning of hostile enemy intentions will require the best efforts of all elements in the intelligence community to deal with its gravest crisis. It is the purpose of this Report to examine the community's present machinery for meeting this challenge and to propose measures to maintain and improve it for the years and crises ahead.

2. The term "warning" as used in this paper refers to strategic, rather than tactical warning. Strategic warning is warning of enemy preparations to attack acquired by intelligence sources and methods, transmitted through intelligence channels, evaluated by intelligence organizations and passed to national security authorities at the highest level for use in determining national policies and reactions. Tactical warning is warning of the actual approach of the enemy (or his weapons) acquired by mechanical sensors for the most part, transmitted through operational channels to tactical force commanders for prompt tactical reactions and countermeasures.

3. The strategic warning system of the U.S. intelligence community was developed during the late forties and early fifties and was strongly conditioned by the strategic surprises at Pearl Harbor and in Korea. Its primary focus was on the USSR and the possibility of a surprise attack, first by Soviet Long Range Aviation and then by ICBM. Concurrently, it was also directed against the possibility of a Soviet ground attack in Europe, with flanking moves in the Middle East, always with the prospect of a rapid escalation into intercontinental nuclear war in the background. This system has never had to face the problems it was designed to meet; throughout its existence it has dealt with peripheral crises--the Arab-Israeli War, the Hungarian revolt, the Syrian-Turkish crisis, the Offshore Islands, Indonesia, Laos, Berlin, Cuba and Vietnam--looking at and past them to the posture of the USSR and China and to signs that the Soviets or the Chinese might be preparing to enter, exploit or expand the local confrontations.

4. As the detente with the USSR continues, questions are being raised as to whether the likelihood of a Soviet attack on the U.S. or its forces or allies abroad has diminished to the point where a special warning effort against that possibility is no longer justified.

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5. We set forth here our firm and central conclusion that, so long as the USSR possesses the means to launch a damaging assault on the U.S., it is essential to maintain continuous surveillance over all the elements of Soviet power which could be involved directly or in a supporting role in that assault. We believe that it is minimum prudence to maintain and improve as expert and as well supported a strategic warning system as the community can develop.

6. We further conclude that:

a) The achievement and maintenance of a high degree of competence in strategic warning matters is a major component of national power; its preservation and improvement are essential;

b) The rise of the Chinese threat requires the development of a substantive expertise on Chinese behavior and processes of readying for war comparable in detail and documentation to that evolved over many years on the USSR;

c) The strategic warning mission of USIB, its Watch Committee and the National Indications Center remains valid and deserves support from USIB along lines suggested in this Report.

d) Intelligence information collection, processing and analysis techniques are likely to go through major changes under the impact of oncoming technological developments. The intelligence community and its strategic warning mechanism must find ways to adapt and exploit these changes for the systematic improvement of the Nation's warning capability.

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SECTION II

Indications Intelligence

1. Indications intelligence is the term used to describe a systematic effort to detect, trace and document enemy preparations a) to initiate hostilities, b) to pursue courses of action involving a risk of hostilities, or c) to move to deter or oppose an anticipated U.S. course of action which appears to risk hostilities, and on that basis to estimate enemy hostile or non-hostile intentions. Indications intelligence has several basic postulates:

a) that no enemy can launch hostilities from a standing start but must make some prior preparations, moves, deployments or force status checks to be sure that his initial offensive strikes are of the force and weight required and that his own defenses are prepared to reduce the effects of U.S. counter-strikes;

b) that the process of preparing for a major war will generate enough aberrations in enemy behavior patterns and activity levels to permit the intelligence community to recognize a condition of abnormality with some degree of specificity;

c) that some preparatory moves can be detected by U.S. intelligence if we know what to look for, where to look for it and how to recognize it;

d) that the best warning we may be able to give may have to be based on fragmentary and inconclusive evidence and on less than perfect proof.

2. Indications intelligence deals essentially with enemy intentions, and these are ephemeral, contingent on and alterable by a great variety of unpredictable events, actions, and interpretations. It is extremely unlikely that direct evidence of hostile enemy intentions will ever be available in such explicitness, accuracy and reliability as to form the basis for U.S. counteractions. It is necessary, therefore, to turn to an extensive, broad-based, essentially inferential process of collecting, processing, correlating, analyzing and drawing judgments from a great field of data of all kinds as to indications of what enemy intentions may be. This process cannot provide certainty and absolute truth; at best it will always be an imperfect and incomplete approximation of what the enemy's posture for and intentions to attack are at a given time.

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3. The critical element in indications intelligence is the prompt recognition of abnormalities in enemy behavior which might reflect a change in enemy posture and capabilities for war. It is essential, therefore, to develop the most accurate and complete understanding of what constitutes normality in all aspects of enemy life which might be affected in preparing for war. Against this baseline of normality, abnormalities can more readily be recognized and evaluated. Isolated abnormalities are constant occurrences; numerous and concurrent abnormalities affecting a broad range of capabilities should prompt a sense of concern and a general warning which can be made progressively more specific as further evidence reveals a widening involvement of the war-making elements of enemy power. Yet even fairly complete information on these matters may not permit clear identification of enemy intentions. It will always be difficult to distinguish whether the enemy intends a preemptive attack, a ready defense against a feared attack, a bluff to support a major international move or a deterrent to some course of action expected from us.

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4. If the recognition of a concurrence of ominous abnormalities in enemy behavior is the basis for strategic warning, it is essential to know in advance what form those abnormalities might take. The basic framework of warning intelligence is the Indicator List, a list of steps which may be taken by the enemy to raise his forces from whatever level they may be at a given time to the level of readiness necessary for waging war. These indicators cover not only military, but also political, economic, scientific, diplomatic, and intelligence activities which are likely to show change as the enemy readies all his assets for their greatest task. Success in developing warning depends on the precision and accuracy of these indicators, the clarity of understanding of them by the various intelligence collection source systems, and the sophistication and perceptiveness on the part of intelligence analysts throughout the community in recognizing evidence--or indications--that these indicators or readying measures are indeed being carried out. An improved warning capability depends on improving the speed and sensitivity of collection sources to these indicators, in learning more about what the enemy really must do in the readying process, and in more promptly and accurately correlating all evidence that readying measures or departures from norms are taking place.

5. Because of the panoramic scope of enemy activity that must be kept under surveillance for the earliest possible detection of abnormalities, because of the need for a great variety of expertise and because of the great volumes of information which must be dealt with, virtually every part of the intelligence community is involved more or less directly in warning intelligence. This diffusion requires a centralizing mechanism to correlate and analyze all indications and

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aberrations wherever they may have been initially perceived. Within most current intelligence organizations there are activities designated as focal points for indications evidence and for the support of the national warning organization, the Watch Committee of the USIB and its staff, the National Indications Center (NIC).

6. Success in providing timely warning will depend on better and more definitive indications information for the strongest possible proof of enemy intentions as early as possible in the process of readying for war. This will depend in turn on the accuracy, sophistication and comprehensiveness of our indicators, the sensitivity of our collection sources in recognizing indications, the perceptiveness of analytical and judgments elements in drawing conclusions from these indications and the ability of top intelligence officials to convey, and of decision makers to understand, the warning this process can produce.

7. The relationship between current and indications intelligence is close and in many ways mutually complementary. Indications intelligence is essentially a specialized way of dealing with current intelligence, and the NIC depends heavily on the support it receives from departmental current intelligence offices. In most crisis situations the line between current and indications intelligence becomes blurred as both operations focus on the same sets of facts and follow the situation together. Differing views between the NIC analysts and those in current intelligence offices as to what those facts mean can give rise to problems in developing community judgments. Ways must be found to take advantage of the specialized skills of both groups. Indications intelligence can contribute, in addition to the shared function of current reporting, research and knowledge in depth of specific patterns of enemy behavior, of specific enemy requirements for war readiness and of prior real or exercise readying processes. These are of great value in interpreting current developments for warning purposes and in watching for the earliest signs of hostile enemy intentions.

8. Indications intelligence in the form of the Watch Committee-NIC system is a means of maintaining a special alert against strategic surprise, a minimum insurance against the possibility that current intelligence operations might overlook or misinterpret significant warning indications and a specialized discipline for keeping continuous watch on the state of enemy capabilities.

SECTION III

Warning Sources and Warning Processes

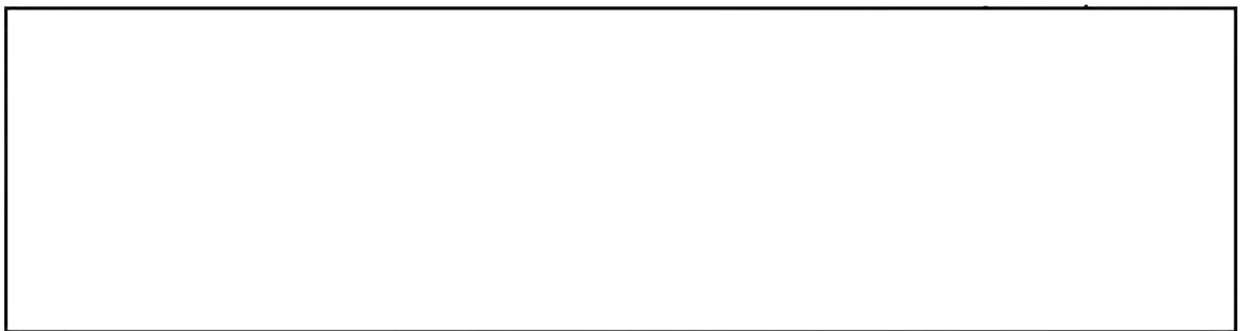
1. In the course of our review of the early warning activities of the U.S. intelligence community, detailed studies were made of all sources of intelligence collection that could contribute to indications intelligence and of all aspects of information processing, analysis, evaluation and judgment which form a part of the warning effort.

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than a decade and a sensitive "feel" for likely propaganda themes in a pre-hostilities crisis has been developed, supported by the extensive

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Guidance of Collection

22. Guidance to collectors for warning purposes exists in general terms in PNIO #1, "Maximum prior warning of impending military attack on the US, on US forces overseas, or on any country which the US is committed to defend", and more specifically in the official USIB General Indicator List, last revised and approved in September 1964. The latter is a list of preparatory actions the enemy could take, grouped under topical headings and arranged as precisely as possible in the chronological order in which the actions would be likely to be carried out. Theoretically, the List should serve as a matrix for incoming evidence (or negative reports) and as a synoptic scenario for the warning effort.

23. The General Indicator List is essentially a statement of information objectives, however, and requires reinterpretation in detailed requirements for specific collection sources. There is a need for this process to be carried out before this kind of collection becomes urgent. Indicators, rephrased as specific collection requirements in terms meaningful to the several collection systems, should be levied on specific collectors and discussed with them so that collectors are aware of the demands that will be placed on them in a crisis, and the users of information have an idea of what information may be forthcoming when needed.

24. The General Indicator List can also serve as a unifying framework for tagging evidence, for data storage, background and baseline analysis, trend assessment and as a check-off list for enemy status reports. On this basis the List can provide coherence and continuity across varieties of information and ensure the examination of evidence in terms of its potential relevance to a given part of the enemy's readying process.

Information Selection

25. Indications information is no different from current information serving other intelligence disciplines. A critical step in the warning process is the recognition that a given item, while useful to current or other intelligence analysis, may also have a special relevance to the enemy's readying efforts. This may be accomplished by watch officers or disseminators at the point of information receipt, by photo interpreters

and SIGINT analysts in processing information, and by intelligence analysts in the community's production offices. What is essential is that ways be found to maintain an alertness by these people to recognize a warning relevance and a willingness to see that the information reaches the NIC as a central repository of indications.

26. Recognition procedures vary in effectiveness for the several collection sources. They are most advanced in the SIGINT Warning System where recognition can take place at the intercept position and where a world-wide network of uniform procedures assures that indications information is sent promptly to the proper analysts, including the NIC. More work is needed to develop a comparable sensitivity in the reconnaissance field. A "warning readout team" of NPIC and NIC people with considerable familiarity with the usual appearance of places likely to be affected in a war readying effort would enhance the possibility of early recognition of warning abnormalities. In the field of human source reporting, a long-standing problem has been how to ensure that scanners and disseminators are fully and currently aware of the concerns and needs of indications analysts. Some upcoming developments in the fields of electronic scanning and dissemination of reports may offer an improved reliability, but nothing replaces a specialized reader who is virtually a warning analyst himself in his sensitivity to warning information.

Automatic Data Processing

27. Automatic data processing (ADP) has been discussed in connection with warning for many years but little real effort has been given to investigating what it can and cannot do for this purpose. Moreover, there has been considerable uncertainty as to the proper objectives to be sought from ADP and the scale of the effort which should be devoted to warning needs. Current ADP techniques can improve the handling and retrieval of indications, correlate indications by a number of sortings for pattern or trend analyses, record events for chronologies and adapt more readily than manual systems to increasing speeds and volumes of information transmissions such as real-time readout would represent. The growth of the community's ability to provide timely strategic warning will depend in an important degree on the successful adaptation of ADP to the warning problem.

28. Probably the most effective way for the NIC to enter the ADP is through piggy-backing on existing systems and those under development among the intelligence agencies. Much of what NIC would need in the way of information retrieval might be furnished by such systems as COINS (Community On-Line Intelligence System) which will permit remote

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querying of certain files of one agency by other agencies. It might suffice for some time to come for NIC to develop certain specialized programs and tapes and run them on computers in CIA and DIA. These programs might support NIC current and research needs such as chronologies, summaries of indications, monitoring of activity levels and, on a more sophisticated plane, model building and simulation. In the future, when the computer file is continually up to date in information, it will be very useful to be able to check all other categories of indicators in the computer store for corroborating abnormalities whenever an unusual trend or act is noticed in one such category.

Evaluation and Analysis

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29. Each of the major intelligence agencies has extensive organizations exploiting, analyzing, publishing and disseminating current intelligence. Each of these organizations and other offices engaged more in research in depth bear part of the community responsibility for providing strategic warning and contribute in various specialized ways to the work of the community's warning machinery--the Watch Committee and the NIC. The relationship between these efforts and the NIC has been well set forth in [] report to Mr. McCone in March 1962; the NIC is described as "an advance warning evaluation center supported by all intelligence agencies in Washington. The NIC serves as a focal point to receive all information that might have a bearing on Soviet intentions to initiate hostilities". The principal function of the NIC was stated as "the evaluation and collation of warning information from a national standpoint in support of the Watch Committee".

30. The NIC is a small interagency organization of 29 persons drawn from CIA, NSA, Army, Navy and the Air Force. The State slot has been left unfilled for over five years. The NIC is headed by a Director from CIA and a Deputy Director, a colonel from Air Force, the executive agent of the organization. The Indications Staff, the day-staff analytical element, is nine persons, supported by two in graphics, two in security functions and three secretaries. The 24-hour Watch Alert Group is composed of 11 men, civilian and military, who carry out the first echelon scanning, selection and noting processes.

31. As time has passed and US-Communist confrontations have increased in number and kind, the Watch Committee has had to cover more and more problems to remain responsive to the USIB and policy levels. Each such extension has widened the area the NIC must deal with in support of the Watch Committee. As a result, NIC's coverage has necessarily become

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more superficial in certain cases and its dependence on and competition with current intelligence offices greater. A basic dilemma confronts the Watch Committee and the NIC: the increasingly complex problem of enemy intentions, the shrinking warning time likely, and the massive consequences of failure to give warning argue for full-time, single-minded concentration on warning indications by at least one intelligence organization. Yet war does not threaten every week, and enemy intentions remain to be dealt with in other areas and in other contexts than that of full-scale Soviet-US nuclear war.

32. One solution to this problem is to redefine the roles of the NIC and departmental current intelligence offices in support of the Watch Committee, shifting the bulk of analysis and reporting on current developments to the current shops and focussing the NIC on the evaluation of specific potential indications which have appeared in the period under review. Such a division of labor would encourage the development of a substantive professionalism in depth in indications matters and reduce the area of overlap between NIC and departmental current reporting responsibilities.

33. NIC's ability to speak authoritatively on indications subjects would be enhanced by the assignment to it of a small (3-5 man) research component which could undertake a needed rethinking of the whole indications system and the individual indicators now relied on for warning. This research component could generate new indicators by wringing out all the lessons to be learned from Soviet behavior in crises, major maneuvers and system tests; it could redefine collection requirements and explore warning potentials in new collection systems; it could sharpen crisis operating procedures; and it could work out a realistic role for ADP in support of warning. Working with research organizations in and outside the intelligence community, it could go further than has ever been possible up to now to assemble and exploit all available information that could shed some light on the kinds of situations the community's warning mechanisms may have to confront.

Judgment

34. The judgment process in the context of warning is constrained and complicated by a number of factors. Working against time and the unknowable future, these warning judgments are subject to uncertainty and inexactness. Dealing with some of the most serious problems of our times, these judgments are understandably hesitant, fearful of being misread and inclined to cautious and sometimes oblique phrasing. Reissued week after week, these judgments are caught between the slowness

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of most big developments and the need at shorter intervals to find some new way to reflect the small changes taking place in situations. Based on less than perfect information, these judgments are often stretched and strained to include a variety of views and, seeking an agreeable or unanimous construction, can end by being less candid and informative than if a dissent were forced.

35. The judgment process for strategic warning is carried out within the Watch Committee cycle each week. The NIC Agenda for the next Watch Committee meeting is drawn up on Friday and serves to identify developments, trends, reports and indications which warrant departmental analysis and discussion at the next session. On Monday, the NIC's draft of the next Watch Report is drawn up and is circulated Tuesday. This draft deals with Agenda and other items as NIC analysts assess them and is subjected to searching study by departmental current analysts. Their comments and changes are sent in prior to the Committee meeting on Wednesday and are incorporated in the draft Report considered at the table. The process at the table, then, becomes essentially editorial with substantive discussion of the pros and cons of changing the draft text. After the meeting the revised draft is forwarded to USIB for noting and dissemination to policy levels.

36. Throughout this course of the weekly cycle, which absorbs about 80% of NIC's efforts, the judgment process is affected by the exchange of ideas between departmental analysts and NIC's analytical staff and by the differences in their perspectives. The result is a document strongly influenced by departmental viewpoints and so can be said to represent the view of the community. The views of NIC analysts, if they differ significantly from those of current intelligence analysts, are usually deleted or diluted in the course of the process. This sometimes raises the question of the usefulness of maintaining a substantive staff in the NIC; these analysts would have greater impact on the Report if they spoke from the agencies from which they came.

37. It is obvious that an effective judgment process requires that it have available to it all the information pertinent to its concerns. NSAM 226 provides that the NIC and the Watch Committee have access to all information and intelligence pertinent to its mission without restriction because of source, policy or operational sensitivity. Implementation of this Presidential Directive is spotty and needs reaffirmation by USIB to its member agencies from time to time. On a different plane, NIC and the Watch Committee need negative information regarding warning indicators as much as they need positive reports. Any warning collection plan in the future should stress the importance of negative reports in maintaining accurate perspective on the status of enemy preparations.

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38. The judgment process also benefits from the inclusion of all pertinent varieties of assessments. Although the State Department sits at the Committee table and participates in the formulation of the Report at that point in the process, its failure for the past five years to assign a State representative to the NIC has deprived the NIC portion of the judgment process of important political and diplomatic inputs. This shortcoming needs repair at the earliest opportunity. The entire warning process would benefit.

39. Despite the numerous changes which have taken place in the intelligence community and in the world's confrontations of power since the present warning machinery was set up in 1954, many aspects of the Watch Committee's operations remain substantially unchanged. The Watch Committee itself should be tasked to examine its well-rooted procedures for possibilities of better relevance to today's world's situations. We would propose as points to be considered:

a) that the Watch Committee's Charter be more narrowly interpreted to encompass those situations in which Soviet or Chinese activities threaten conflict with US strategic interests (this would include Vietnam, exclude Indian-Pakistani, Arab-Israeli, Indonesian-Malaysian and other peripheral tensions);

b) that the Committee meet at less frequent intervals--bi-weekly or monthly, with the option for more frequent meetings as circumstances warrant;

c) that the Committee Report address itself more to measuring changes and directions in the situations it covers rather than to rewriting recent current publications;

d) that the NIC's contribution address itself fundamentally to an accounting of the indications present in those situations;

e) that the Committee be charged to arrive at an assessment as to the prospects in the conflicts it is "watching".

40. In general, these proposals are directed toward focussing the Committee's work on real threats to US strategic interests, on actual or potential engagements of US forces with Soviet or Chinese or other Communist forces. The Committee's efforts would be to arrive at an assessment, a short-term estimate, of the likelihood of fighting or enlargement of existing conflict based on indications analyzed and submitted by the NIC and commented on by departmental experts. In this way the Committee's product would fill a gap between regular current

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intelligence publications and national estimates. The result would be a versatile Committee and NIC, able to deal with longer-term trends in situations of strategic significance and with rapidly developing crises in responding to the needs of policy-makers and of the USIB.

SECTION IV

Warning Costs and Warning Customers

Costs of Warning

1. A few words on the subject of the overall cost of the warning effort are necessary. We have not conducted a cost/effectiveness study, but we are aware of the size of the several budgets involved in the total effort. In some areas we have found problems; most of these are for decision and resolution by the internal management of the agencies concerned; on some we venture an opinion:

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b) We believe that the collectors, especially NSA, are tasked for too many reports in the name of warning. There is a tendency in intelligence to ask for more without attempting to cancel earlier requests for what has become unnecessary. This is particularly true in the case of warning information where no one seems willing to give up what may have become relatively unproductive efforts simply because there continues to be a slim chance that something of value might turn up some day. The several agencies involved in the warning effort should take a stronger role in policing those requirements levied in the name of warning.

c) We are unable to identify with any precision specific collection programs or analysis efforts more or less involved in the warning effort which could be cut in the interest of saving money. The inevitable tendency toward departmental duplication and the inevitable justification of these efforts on the grounds that in-house capabilities are needed constitute effective bars to any wholesale cost-saving reductions. The all too human tendency to try to learn more and more about everything and the failure to distinguish between what is necessary and what, by contrast, would be "nice to know" complicate any broad effort to improve the situation in intelligence requirements, including those requirements connected with strategic warning. Yet the rising costs of intelligence collection, processing, exploitation and analysis will inevitably force sharper and sharper scrutiny of the real value of what we

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are doing in various fields; the warning effort should be no exception.

d) Notwithstanding the foregoing, we do not believe that the warning effort by itself can be the subject of a valid cost/effectiveness study. Except for limited and relatively inexpensive activities such as the NIC, the costs of the warning effort are inextricably tied into collection, processing and analysis activities which produce indications intelligence as only a portion of their total output. The proportion assessable against early warning would be virtually impossible to determine.

Warning Customers

2. In the last analysis, the success of the warning effort will be measured by the actions taken by national decision makers in response to warnings given. It is of the greatest importance therefore that users of warning understand the capabilities and limits of the product they may one day receive. The decision makers need to be reminded from time to time that the best the intelligence community is likely to produce will be a deductive judgment based on observable enemy preparations and that the actions taken in response to warning will have to be taken on less than absolute proof of hostile enemy intentions. There should be a constant dialogue between the DCI and the customers of warning in any crisis situation so that the decision makers are continually aware of the progress of the situation, of the indications of successive stages in readiness, and of the degree of probability that more specific warning will be available as time passes.

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SECTION V

Recommendations

1. We submit herewith a number of recommendations for improving the warning capabilities of the intelligence community. We believe that conscientious and monitored implementation of these recommendations will do much to ensure that when and if strategic warning is required, the community's mechanisms will be able to meet the need.

2. General Recommendations:

a) The USIB should reaffirm its support of the mission of its Watch Committee and the National Indications Center and should give favorable consideration and support to the recommendations below.

b) The DCI should designate a Warning Systems Monitor to follow up the implementation of this Report's recommendations and to ensure that new advances in intelligence techniques are fully exploited to improve the warning capabilities of the intelligence community.

3. Recommendations for Warning Sources

COMINT:

a) A study should be undertaken under the supervision of the Chairman of the Watch Committee to identify COMINT processing and reporting programs whose value to the warning effort may have diminished to where they can be stopped or merged with other reporting series.

b) The Chairman of the Watch Committee should arrange for the extension of sensitive source clearances to all NIC and Watch Committee members so that full use can be made of compartmented materials in warning analysis and research.

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Reconnaissance:

7 e) NPIC and DIA should initiate a series of PI studies to measure activity levels at various installations of relevance to warning to determine the identifiability of important changes in activity at various times. From such studies could come the baselines of normal appearances for each installation, against which changes of warning significance could be quickly recognized.

8 f) NPIC and NIC should collaborate in producing a Reconnaissance Warning Survey, somewhat as a counterpart to the SIGINT Warning Survey, building on the results of e) above. Such a study could serve to guide the initial PI readout as the SIGINT Survey guides the intercept operator in recognizing indications. It could also provide the authoritative vehicle for Reconnaissance Warning Requirements.

9 g) As progress in the above steps is achieved, consideration should be given to the creation of warning readout teams of PI's and NIC analysts to scan new photography on a routine basis for evidence of abnormalities at locations of warning interest.

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Clandestine Services:

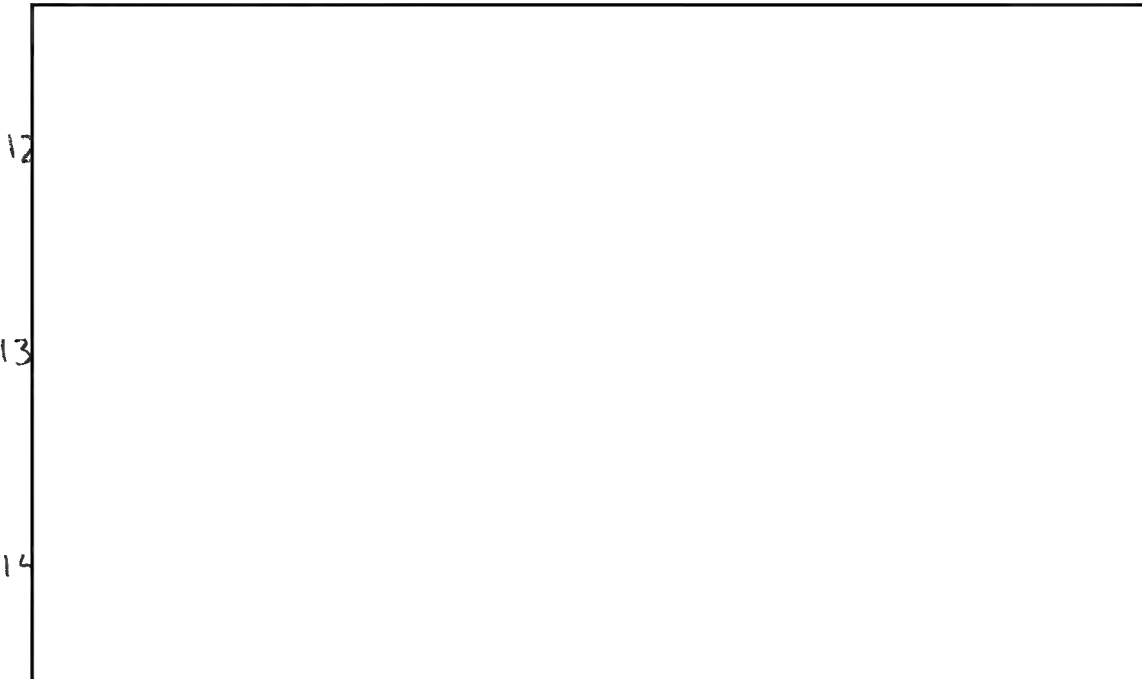
11 i) CIA should designate a central point of reference in the Clandestine Services to handle NIC needs, to relay warning information from sensitive covert sources, to inform the Watch Committee and the NIC of changes in warning capabilities, and to monitor and exploit any unique warning capabilities of foreign intelligence services.

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Overt Human Sources:



4. Recommendations for Warning Processes

Guidance of Collection

15 a) The USIB should reaffirm the status of the General Indicator List as its basic guidance for warning information collection and management and should enjoin organizations involved in warning processes to use the List and its indicator designators as the basic framework for information reporting, indexing, dissemination, ADP storage and retrieval and correlation.

16 b) The NIC should convert the USIB General Indicator List into a specific Warning Collection Plan, translating individual indicators into detailed requirements expressed in terms meaningful to the several collection sources which might obtain pertinent indications information. These requirements should be forwarded to the collectors to alert them to their responsibilities in crisis situations.

17 c) The NIC and the Watch Committee should take prompt steps to develop a counterpart to the General Indicator List for the warning problem represented by Communist China. This too should be converted into a specific collection plan and laid on collectors through appropriate departmental machinery.

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Information Selection

18 d) The Warning Systems Monitor should follow developments in communications with reference to their capability to speed the flow of warning information. Operations of the Criticomm net are of particular relevance in this context and should be closely followed.

19 e) The Warning Systems Monitor should maintain awareness of developments in automatic document scanning and dissemination techniques with a view to the benefits which they may provide in the selection and distribution of incoming warning information.

Automatic Data Processing

20 f) The Chairman of the Watch Committee should coordinate a concentrated effort to determine the requirements of the NIC for ADP methods, explore existing techniques and systems for adaptation of NIC needs, and develop new programs for NIC research support and quick recall and review of indicator categories for significant indications.

Evaluation and Analysis

21 g) The NIC should review and reinforce procedures by which its current information needs are watched for by alert mechanisms throughout the intelligence community. It should ensure that changes in interests and needs are promptly passed to these offices and that these offices are aware of their responsibility to spot pertinent information for transmission to NIC.

22 h) The Department of State should take prompt steps to restore its assignment of an experienced political analyst to the NIC to provide analysis of the political contexts of critical warning problems.

23 i) Member agencies of the Watch Committee should contribute qualified personnel for the formation of a small research component in the NIC to strengthen the specialized substantive competence of the NIC in warning subjects.

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Judgment

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25 k) The Director of NIC and the Warning Systems Monitor should review existing intelligence reporting instructions pertinent to the warning problem to ensure that adequate provision is made for negative reporting on certain key indicators during crisis periods in order that accurate perspective can be maintained on the enemy's intentions and progress toward combat readiness.

26 l) The Watch Committee should examine the changes in its operations proposed in paragraph 39 of Section III and recommend to USIB the adoption of those they consider feasible. These changes call for less frequent Committee meetings, Committee assessments on situations it has under surveillance, and more room for dissents in Committee conclusions. P-16

27 m) The Watch Committee or the Warning Systems Monitor should study the role of the Watch Committee and the NIC in crisis management plans and procedures so that these mechanisms can adjust in advance to the likely needs for quick-reaction and prompt judgments in critical situations.

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REPORT ON STRATEGIC WARNING

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already seen and soon to be seen again in visual photography, SLR would provide an important real time continuity in a fast-building crisis or in late stages of Soviet preparations and deployments.

C-20. The potential in satellite imaging reconnaissance systems gives some ground for hope that increasing complexities in the warning problem can be dealt with, although probably with rising costs. One clear conclusion is inescapable: the investments in sensor and vehicle development will require comparable investments in means of exploitation and analysis. The technical revolution in information collection, epitomized by the reconnaissance field, is only just beginning to be felt. Its full impact promises to be enormous and will be expensive, but the great volumes of information we are learning to collect must be dealt with or wasted. Nowhere will this problem be sharper than [redacted] which seems inevitable at some date in the future, no matter what the technical difficulties. The importance of [redacted] is obvious; when it comes, its effect on intelligence analysis and judgment processes is likely to be revolutionary.

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ANNEX F

Guidance of Collection

F-1. The original concepts of indications intelligence generally held that indicator lists--Checklists, as they were often called--would serve to express the warning information needs of the intelligence community. Indicators, descriptions of preparatory measures we could expect the enemy to take, were grouped under substantive or topical headings and were listed as precisely as possible in the chronological order in which such steps probably would be taken. Theoretically, the collector could follow the list down, indicator by indicator, and know what to look for next. Theoretically, too, the warning analysts, stacking indications up beside the indicators they pertained to, could tell what level of readiness the enemy was reaching and could request special collection efforts to be aimed precisely at the kinds of indicators logically next to appear. Theoretically, the General Indicator List would form the matrix for incoming indications (or negative reports) and serve as a synoptic scenario for the whole warning effort at all steps in the enemy's readying process. The List would thus unify and regulate a wide variety of activities from collection to ultimate judgment and decision. Essentially, this concept is still valid and practical, but for a number of reasons it has failed to be as effective in practice as it should be in both warning collection and warning analysis.

The USIB General Indicator List

F-2. The principal official indicator list today is the USIB General Indicator List, last revised and approved in September 1964. Its failure to serve effectively as a warning collection guide certainly does not derive from its lack of status or distribution or from absence of formal recognition of the warning problem. The General Indicator List theoretically amplifies Priority National Intelligence Objectives #1 and #2 which read:

"1. Maximum prior warning of impending military attack on the US, on US forces overseas, or on any country which the US is committed to defend."

"2. Major changes in the capabilities, posture and concepts for employment of Soviet, Chinese Communists, and Cuban strategic military forces, with particular reference to Soviet nuclear delivery capabilities, Soviet development of new or significantly improved offensive or defensive weapon systems, and Chinese Communist development of nuclear weapons and related delivery systems."

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F-3. The List is imbedded in collection guidance to the Clandestine Services in the IPC List of the Interagency Clandestine Collection Priorities Committee. The first item in the list reads:

"Warning of Military Attack

"The provision of strategic and tactical warning of military attack on the US, on US forces overseas, or on any country which the US is committed to defend is the highest priority task of the Intelligence Community.

"Maximum warning on the basis of strategy and plans would, of course, have to be obtained from the enemy's political and military command structure. Less direct but nevertheless highly important evidence can be provided by such physical manifestations of imminent hostilities as are catalogued in the United States Intelligence Board's General Indicator List.

"These indicators should be reported when they are observed but the List is not intended as a basis for planning and programming clandestine collection operations since not all indicators are amenable to that mode of collection, and not all of them are meaningful by themselves as manifestations of the imminence of hostilities."

F-4. An earlier and slightly modified version of the USIB Checklist is incorporated but not identified as such in Chapter 3 of DIA's Intelligence Collection Guide, Armed Forces (DIAM 58-5-1 of 30 April 1963 Indicators). As the Foreword states, "It (the Manual on Indicators) is to be used not only as guidance by all DOD agencies having intelligence collection missions, but also for coordination by these agencies with other organizations having an early warning collection potential". This Manual went to all the Unified and Specified Commands, the JCS, the Service Departments (1322 copies to Navy alone), other US intelligence agencies and some of the service war colleges.

F-5. The General Indicator List forms the core of the SIGINT Warning System, and pertinent indicators from it have been sent to all intercept stations having a collection potential against them.

F-6. In the reconnaissance world, the General Indicator List affects collection and readout but more remotely, the yield from reconnaissance being so different in nature from other collection

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system products. The List serves to highlight activity patterns which might be discerned in photography in static stages separated by considerable time. Except for working to maximize targets covered in early orbits of a crisis or warning satellite, collection guidance in reconnaissance terms is really readout guidance to photo-interpreters. Work has been begun to identify baselines in certain classes of Soviet activity as a precursor of warning readout guidance on Soviet forces.

A Warning Collection Plan

F-7. The failure of the General Indicator List as a guide to collection, except as a statement of information objectives, lies in the fact that such documents as those cited above have little real effect on collection activities day by day. Real collection action is guided by special, short, focused requirements which clearly assign responsibility for the satisfaction of the stated need, along with priorities and deadlines. This fixing of responsibility for delivery is the key to effective guidance, and the General Indicator List cannot do that, however august its auspices.

F-8. The translation of the general list (which is a statement of collection objectives and no more) into relevant specific guidance must be a separate operation in which the information needs of indications intelligence are re-expressed as detailed requirements, drawing on the indicators in the List and describing their possible reflections in terms meaningful to specific collectors or collection systems. These requirements should be forwarded to the collectors to alert them to their probable responsibilities in times of crisis and to give them time to plan how to carry out such collection. Because such assignments can grow dim or inappropriate with time, they should be modified and reissued to collectors periodically.

F-9. Thoughtfully and meticulously executed, these requirements would constitute in the aggregate a Warning Collection Plan, with the parts to be played by each of the various collection sources clearly defined in terms of collection targets, priorities and responsibilities. Worked out, requirement by requirement, with the collectors, such a plan would introduce a measure of order and reduce uncertainty about the information we might hope to receive in a pre-hostilities period. Considerable latitude will be needed to provide for the unforeseen, but at least a consistent community-wide warning collection program will have come into being, and the collectors will know much more clearly what they will be expected to do.

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Uses of the List

F-10. For its part, the General Indicator List is still essential to the indications intelligence process as a matrix for incoming information or for negative reports on indicators, as a reminder of what else may be occurring, and as a scenario of enemy preparations. Indeed, an important remedy for some of the problems of indications intelligence lies in more sophisticated use of the General Indicator List as a unifying information plan, as a tool for tagging evidence in reporting and data storage, and as a framework for analysis, revealing interrelationships and warning implications in discrete bits of data.

F-11. More can still be done to use the List as a means for assuring that all the potentially pertinent information on enemy preparations is assembled at a central point, regardless of its source or sensitivity, for analysis and correlation in a continuing frame of reference which can move forward in detail with various stages in enemy readiness. The USIB General Indicator List should be used by all organizations connected with warning, regardless of their affiliation, as the basic framework for information reporting, indexing, dissemination, ADP storage and retrieval, and analysis and correlation. The general structure of the List will probably not require much change for a number of years; it is structurally essentially the same as the original lists in 1948. We believe the List is sufficiently durable to serve as the framework for warning information systems community-wide, and on this basis it can introduce coherence and continuity into wide varieties of sources and troublesome ambiguities of information.

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F-13. We are faced with an urgent need to apply the procedures described in this section to develop guidance for warning collection against Communist China. Much preliminary guidance has been given in response to the Chinese threat in the Vietnamese situation. What is needed is to pull that guidance together in a systematic way, to produce a List of Indicators of Chinese intentions to broaden hostilities in Asia and then to redefine those indicators in a Chinese Warning Collection Plan in terms that are meaningful to various collectors. Some help can be found in the General Indicator List, but broad differences exist between significant Russian behavior and counterparts for China and in the types of war that might be fought. Chinese patterns have yet to be given the amount of sophisticated and sustained study that has been applied to the Russian case; here is a gap that needs to be closed soon.

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ANNEX G

Information Selection

Communications

G-1. This Survey was concerned with communications so far as fast, dependable communications are the lifeline of any warning system. There are few warning communications problems that are not part of larger and more general communications situations. For example, the communications required for handling [redacted] for warning purposes will be derived from a general growth in systems sophistication and capacity, not from specifically warning-oriented development. Nevertheless, good communications systems should be continuously monitored as part of a status check of national warning resources. New communications developments should be kept track of for potential contributions toward improving warning system responsiveness and capacities to bear heavy loads in times of crisis.

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Recognition and Dissemination

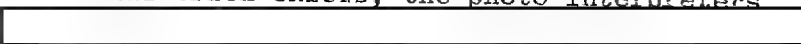
G-3. Except for a few special efforts and except for extraordinary collection activities responding to a crisis, the bulk of information used by the warning effort is collected by the same sources and methods which routinely supply all other intelligence disciplines. For all practical purposes, warning information is indistinguishable from all other incoming intelligence information. Thus, a critically important moment in the warning process is the recognition that a given fragment of information may possess potential significance to warning analysis.

G-4. This recognition occurs at several levels in the intelligence machinery. It can occur at the "first-level exploitation" level where current intelligence information bearing on warning matters is selected out of the flow of current traffic by intelligence watch officers and

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given a preliminary evaluation as it is passed on to analysts or further up the echelons. Recognition also takes place at points further removed from the analytical process at the levels of the report disseminators, the field or headquarters SIGINT trick chiefs, the photo-interpreters and the specialists in  collection methods. There are recognition problems peculiar to each of these levels and systems which need to be dealt with before the volumes of incoming information from future improved collection systems become unmanageable.

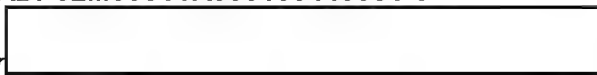
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G-7. A major assist toward this objective would be the formation of a Warning Readout Team of selected PIs and analysts from NIC. This group would read out newly arrived film for warning content as film is now read by specialists for new details on ICBM's, missile complexes, nuclear energy installations, submarines and the like. Nothing succeeds in this area like practice, and the chances of early recognition of alerting abnormalities would be greatly enhanced by routine, regular review of current missions by such an NPIC-NIC team. At the least these men would become intimately familiar with the usual appearances of places where in the future indicative changes might appear. One useful product of their studies could be a far more thorough and realistic counterpart of the table in the Reconnaissance Annex (Annex C).

Human Source Reports

G-8. Human source reporting presents a different problem. Where SIGINT and Reconnaissance recognition processes deal with information of certain quite specific kinds, human reporting covers a wide range of content and detail from sources of greatly varying knowledgeability and reliability. Moreover, those outside current intelligence channels who select reports for warning analysts are more remote from the warning problem than those in SIGINT and, for certain problems, in Reconnaissance. They must spot information of less easily perceived relevance to warning. The long-standing problem has been how to ensure that scanners and disseminators are fully aware of the needs of warning analysts and to relieve the analyst's natural concern and inclination to try to scan all the material himself. The objective of improvements in the area of scanning and dissemination should be to increase the precision and reliability of material identification and selection so as to free the analyst for more productive research or reviews of recent events for possible indications patterns.

G-9. We suggest that a trial arrangement for scanning human-source reports be tested in CIA in OCR's Documents Division. Scanners handling categories of documents by type and office of origin could select documents according to the general subject categories of the major headings of the General Indicator List and forward them to a single scanner assigned to the warning problem full-time. The secondary screener would be fully aware of all the indicators in the List, the current concerns of NIC and other warning support outfits and the content of reports already sent to NIC. On the basis of this knowledge, he could eliminate the irrelevant, obsolete or duplicative reports and also, as an added time-saver, route the documents to the appropriate analysts in NIC.

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The effect of such a system would be to tap for the first time on a regular basis a whole layer of reporting up to now generally out of reach. The product of this effort would be especially helpful when a warning research component gets to work; it would be able to use such data more than the current squad who tend to live by the latest cables and teletypes.

G-10. We also suggest that a concurrent test be made of the holdings of the Intellofax document retrieval system against indicator topics as a means of surveying the quality of the information base available to support the work of a warning research component. This kind of review has never been possible in the face of the reading loads and time pressures of the weekly Watch Committee cycle.

Dissemination Systems

G-11. There are a number of automatic document scanning, selection and dissemination techniques under study at various points in the intelligence community. Several being investigated by CIA's Cable Secretariat and by the National Military Command Center appear quite promising. In general, the systems are aimed at dealing with the sizeable increases expected in both message volumes and numbers of electrical transmissions over the next few years--perhaps as much as 8 to 10% a year. They are also experimenting with remote print-out of the messages at the analyst's locations and with electronic storage for extended periods and retrieval by cathode ray tube display as well as hard copy. As communications centers expand in capacity, message handling down the line to the analyst will come under heavy pressure to go automatic too. This will be true also in the warning community, and new developments of this nature should be monitored for benefits to warning analysts along with others.

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ANNEX H

Automatic Data Processing

Some General Ideas

H-1. The determination of the proper role of automatic data processing (ADP) in warning intelligence has always been a difficult and uncertain thing. Some enthusiasts have visualized ADP doing practically all the information handling, including generating conclusions about the enemy's intentions and probable actions. Skeptics have rejected ADP as incapable of coping with all the varieties of report types, sources, and reliabilities, degrees of detail, variations in timeliness and multiplicities of content and vocabulary. All generally agree that machine methods cannot replace the human intellect in the analysis and judgment roles, and most acknowledge that, properly controlled and used, machines can be effectively employed as aids to analytical processes.

H-2. Despite a considerable history of discussion of the subject, the intelligence community has little actual experience in the use of ADP in roles similar to those required in warning analysis. Only a few attempts have been made to investigate in depth and detail what ADP can do for warning, and even these have been hampered by general confusion as to the objectives sought and the nature of machine assistance expected.

H-3. Current ADP techniques can add speed and accuracy to the processing and manipulation of the increasing volumes of information coming into the indications system. They can reduce the inefficiency of reliance on memory and of dependence on manual data files. They can adapt readily to the growth in volumes and speeds of communication, and they can cope with the problems that will be posed

They can ensure that all relevant new information is properly tagged with indicator designations and they can route that information in various forms to the proper analysts without the wasteful intervention of supporting personnel. And, most importantly, they are flexible and versatile enough to adapt to a wide variety of tasks and situations as the needs of the warning community alter and grow. It is correct to say that the growth and improvement of the community's warning capability will depend in a major way on its ability to enlist ADP in the warning effort.

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Past Experience

Its report, "Automation and the NIC", discussed "the theory and techniques of indications intelligence and described a recommended data handling system designed to improve and extend the capability of the National Indications Center" and recommended the use of ADP-associated techniques in three areas:

H-5. The first concerned the problem of identifying various types of warfare and establishing for each type the most pertinent indicators and hypotheses of action. Available information would then be weighted according to relevance and assigned to various hypotheses. Continuous track could be kept of all information on each hypothesis and a determination made as to which hypothesis best fit the incoming indicators.

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The conclusion that all these methods had some potential in

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early warning analysis was tempered by the authors' caveat that further study would be necessary before a precise judgment of the effectiveness of their use could be made. That conclusion is still valid today.

Present Position

H-9. All intelligence agencies have developed and are continuing to increase the use of machine systems for processing information, most of them for storage, manipulation and retrieval.

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Some Uses of ADP for Warning Analysis

H-12. There is no doubt that automatic data processing techniques can be effectively employed in warning analysis. The state of computer technology now allows the analyst to converse in his own vernacular with a computer at a remote location, a capability which can greatly reduce the time required to retrieve a vital piece of information. Display consoles are becoming familiar peripheral devices on time-sharing computers; through them several analysts can obtain answers to their questions immediately instead of having to pore over voluminous listings. Display consoles also provide powerful analytical tools for data reduction and analysis. Activity rates can be quickly converted to bar charts or line graphs, for example, and the scales can be quickly adjusted to enable the console operator to concentrate upon significant deviations in the entire picture.

H-13. Some examples of specific uses of computers to assist warning analysis follow:

a) Chronologies: Formatted records of indications information tagged by related indicator in the General Indicator List, date of information, date received, geographic area concerned, subject and source. The complete text of the indication could be entered in each record or only a portion, cross referenced to the basic entry. If the same fixed information were provided for each item of information, chronologies could automatically be generated for source within subject area and within source by date; by indicator within date or in any other sequence desired by the analyst. This increased flexibility to order the data in different ways could well provide the imaginative analyst with new insights into the correlation of events.

b) Summaries of Indications: These would be an automatic byproduct of the system to produce chronologies. The criterion for inclusion in the Summary could be date, geographic area, or possibly a specific tag inserted in the record after the information had been analyzed and evaluated.

c) EKG System: The continual monitoring of a large number of data streams to identify deviations from the normal activity level would be greatly simplified by electronic data processing. Establishment of the norms themselves would be simplified by allowing the intelligence analyst to display the activity--say, numbers of Soviet submarines out-of-area--over varying spans of time to determine

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whether seasonal patterns or individual events such as national holidays affect the activity level. Once the norms were established, it would be easy to program the monitoring system to display only those events which represented significant aberration--i.e., "warning by exception". Furthermore, the availability in machine language of fairly complete statistics of the activity levels of the USSR and other potential adversaries would permit the warning analysts to apply certain methodologies which have proven fruitful in other disciplines. Multiple correlation, for example, could perhaps lead to an association of indicators which is not readily apparent otherwise.

d) Simulation: A computer is essential for simulation, model-building, or gaming unless the elements in the system are only a dozen or fewer. Through the use of a simulation program, the cumulative effect of all the indicators could be rapidly computed for any postulated situation (the weights assigned to each indicator would be assigned by the warning analysts) and the time frame as well as the weighting system itself could be easily changed. One major advantage of simulation is that the effect of individual components (i.e., indications) of complex systems (i.e., the entire strategic setting) can be isolated and evaluated. The over-all posture of a potential adversary can be automatically included in the consideration of the significance of any single event which may appear to be ominous.

e) Status Checks: In the future when indications from all sources are fed into the computer file at the same time they reach the analyst, i.e., when the computer file is current up to the minute, it will be a major advantage to be able, whenever an ominous item is received, to query all other indicator files for any corroborating abnormalities or unusual activities. This sort of "ripple-scan" across the board would greatly increase the speed and precision of NIC and Watch Committee reaction and evaluation.

ADP In NIC

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H-14. NIC's entry into the ADP field is overdue. It has been over four years since the end of the [] but the pressures of events and the weekly cycle of Watch Committee-NIC activities has precluded any further systematic efforts to adapt ADP techniques specifically to warning needs. As noted earlier, one major bar to progress in this area has been

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the uncertainty about what ADP should do for warning. This obstacle will not be removed until a research component has been established in NIC and its needs explored and understood. The researchers would probably be the heaviest users of ADP resources; most of the applications suggested in the preceding paragraph are research tools, although also useful in support of current analysis.

H-15. Once a research capability has been set up, a systems analyst with intelligence experience should be assigned to work with the researchers in determining real ADP requirements, exploring existing techniques for adaptation to NIC needs, devising ways to use existing systems and files and fixing the needs for computer time. When this has been done, it will be a great deal easier to determine the extent to which special ADP R&D projects will be needed in addition. Our present impression is that piggy-backing on other systems will probably meet NIC needs for some time, along with some special NIC tapes to be run on a nearby computer as needed. Again, the directions and rates of progress of NIC research efforts will be instrumental in setting specifications for any special warning ADP programs.

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I-7. In DIA's system, the Alert Officer is the key to the operation of the system since he can orchestrate a wide variety of resources to deal with a given message or situation at any time around the clock. This officer is more often concerned with current intelligence matters than with warning per se, but to the degree that the two are almost co-terminous at this level, warning analysis can benefit from an effective quick response current intelligence mechanism. At times when the warning aspect of current intelligence increases with rising tensions, warning needs are placed high in the priorities of the Alert Branch functions.

I-8. CIA: In CIA, warning functions are centered in the Office of Current Intelligence which contains the Indico (Indications Coordinator) Staff. This staff supports the Chairman of the Watch Committee, selects information for NIC, procures analyses, evaluations and viewpoints from current intelligence analysts to help NIC and the Chairman and monitors the flow of current information made available to it by the CIA Operations Center. It shares the first-level early-reaction function with the Ops Center, which carries it around the clock. The Indications Staff applies a sharp warning-oriented scan to current information and is a valuable backup to both the NIC and current intelligence branches.

I-9. State: In State, warning functions are indistinguishable from usual intelligence research and production. Except for COMINT and Clandestine Services reports, INR has no monopoly over the circulation of warning information in the Department; area desks and policy makers get information from State's Ops Center at the same time as INR does.

I-10. NIC: In NIC, the first-level function is performed by the 24-hour watch officers who scan incoming cables, teletypes and FBIS and press ticker for items of potential indications value. Those they select are typed up and reproduced in the Watch Officers Notes, an informal compilation of indications selected by each watch which was originally intended to be a quick briefing of NIC analysts each morning on events during the night. This publication has gradually come to be regarded by current military analysts in NSA, DIA and CIA as a comprehensive, easily read digest of potentially significant reports. Watch officers in NIC are assigned for fairly long tours of duty; they bring to their scanning process considerable continuity and experience. Because they are in an indications-oriented environment, their selections are sensitive and responsive to the needs and concerns of the analysts of the day-time staff and the indicators of the General Indicator List.

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I-11. Binding these separate first-level scanning and evaluation functions together is a strong tradition of frequent checks, comparing of notes and sharing of ideas among the watch officers on duty in the various agencies. As a means for quick dissemination of information and for exchanging or coordinating judgments on new developments, the equal of this informal circuit would be hard to find. Here is the strongest guarantee we have that important information will be brought before the right people and that follow-ups and implementing actions will be in skilled hands.

I-12. This first-level is important. The continuity of the community through the night and over weekends is in this group. Under surprise conditions and in fast moving situations, the men on these watches become in effect the community. During the day these men are usually the first to know of new events and breaks in situations. The success of the warning effort requires that these men be aware of the information needs of warning analysts as they follow moving situations on a minute-to-minute basis.

Current Intelligence Operations

I-13. The current intelligence operations of the several intelligence agencies are inseparable from the warning process. In general, they sift out items of warning significance, in a way backstopping the first-echelon exploitation mechanisms, and provide interpretation based on background information or technical expertise.

I-14. DIA: Current intelligence in DIA is interwoven with DIA's warning effort in the Intelligence Support and Indications Center (ISIC), divided into four substantive divisions for the Soviet Bloc, Eastern, Western and Latin American areas. Together with the Indications Center's Alert Branch, these offices have a substantial capability to evaluate current information and initiate a variety of collection actions to fill gaps in our knowledge. These divisions are the primary mechanism for research in support of warning, contributing to the "in-house" daily publication, the Daily Analytical Warning Summary (DAWS). The Soviet Bloc section of this publication is arranged to follow the major headings in the USIB General Indicator List, with daily comments on activities of the Soviet forces and entities covered therein. This structure permits indexing the items in depth for microfilm retrieval. The DAWS is disseminated to a relatively limited readership which includes the Chairman of the JCS, the Director of the Joint Staff, the National Military Command Center, the J-2's of the Unified and Specified Commands and to the NIC.

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I-15. Direct DIA support to warning is also provided through participation in the watch cycle. The Chief, Indications Division, ISIC provides items for discussion by the DIA Watch Committee member at the Watch meeting and amplifies them with contributions from current analysts at the pre-Watch meeting.

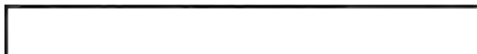
I-16. For deeper research, information in depth, and technical enlightenment, ISIC can turn to the Production Center and to DIAST, DIA's Scientific and Technical Office which can support the warning effort on demand with reference services and expert manpower to augment ISIC resources during crises. Both these offices could manage and monitor research contracts for warning purposes outside DIA.

I-18. State: In State, as has been noted earlier, no distinction is made between current and warning analysis. The support to the State member of the Watch Committee is drawn from the regular current analysis and reporting of INR and deals for the most part with the political elements and forces in the situations under current review. The political picture is of course an indispensable ingredient in warning analysis. Sound analysis of the political context within which a critical warning problem is developing is essential to the proper assessment and interpretation of the available military indications, whose true significance must be weighed against the political posture of the potential enemy. Much necessary good would be accomplished by making this input available at the NIC level, and it is urgently recommended that State restore its assignment of an analyst to the NIC Staff at once. The absence of an experienced State man on the NIC Staff is a severe handicap to the NIC.

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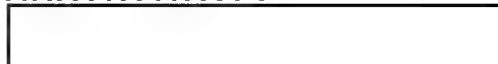
I-19. CIA: In CIA, the warning contributions of intelligence production offices, such as OCI, ORR and, on special problems, OSI and FMSAC, are pulled together by the Indications Control Officer (Indico) on the staff of the Director of Current Intelligence. Indico serves as NIC's agent in CIA, obtaining assessments from analysts, arranging for staff positions on Watch Committee agenda items, chairing pre-Watch meetings and maintaining contact with elements in the Clandestine Services as they are involved in warning problems. It provides briefings for the NIC and Watch Committee, arranges for expert support, works out requirements on Agency collection assets and represents the Agency in interagency discussions concerned with warning matters. Indico performs the essential service of efficiently bringing to bear on warning problems the full range of Agency resources in collection, analysis and judgment.

I-20. Outside Washington: Current intelligence and indications support to the warning effort outside Washington is provided through the world-wide DOD Indications System with ISIC of DIA as its center, linking together counterpart centers in all the major commands in the US and overseas. Each of these Centers is supported by local NSA elements and Operations Groups and exercises a double function of support to DIA/ISIC and to the local commander in operational intelligence for the command mission. All these Centers are 24-hour operations, guided and coordinated by ISIC, exchanging information and evaluations in a continually alert world-wide warning mechanism.

The National Indications Center (NIC)

I-21. The organizations described above are involved in the warning problem, but their main function is current intelligence. For the National Indications Center, its main function is warning. The NIC is described in the Charter of the Watch Committee of USIB, DCID 1/5, as the operational and administrative staff of the Watch Committee.  reporting to Mr. McCone on 1 March 1962 on his review of the Watch Committee and the NIC, described the NIC as "an advance warning evaluation center supported by all intelligence agencies in Washington. The NIC serves as a focal point to receive all information that might have a bearing on Soviet intentions to initiate hostilities." The principal function of the NIC was stated as "the evaluation and collation of warning information from a National standpoint in support of the Watch Committee".

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I-22. The NIC is a small interagency organization of 29 persons drawn from CIA, NSA, Army, Navy and the Air Force. The State slot has been left unfilled for over five years. The NIC is headed by a Director from CIA and a Deputy Director, a colonel from Air Force, the executive agent of the organization. The Indications Staff, the day-staff analytical element, is nine persons, supported by two in Graphics, two in security functions and three secretaries. The 24-hour Watch Alert Group is composed of 11 men, civilian and military, who carry out the first echelon scanning, selection and noting processes described earlier.

NIC Analysis Functions

I-23. The analysis function of NIC is difficult to describe in isolation from the weekly cycle in which it moves. This cycle absorbs more than 80% of NIC analytical energies. Most of NIC analysis consists of attempts to determine the meaning of events in situations under Watch Committee scrutiny and the relation of those events to present enemy intentions and capabilities or to future enemy actions. Its efforts are to provide rapid intelligence responses to imminent or actual critical developments, to recognize evidence reflecting possible enemy intentions and to identify as early as possible potentially ominous trends and patterns in general enemy behavior, whether in the context of peripheral areas of confrontation or in internal postures of enemy forces or areas of activity involved in the readying process.

I-24. Another kind of NIC analysis, regrettably small in proportion to other NIC efforts and to the need for this kind of work, is its substantive research in depth uniquely focussed on indications problems: the development of better indicators, determination of new information requirements for new collection systems or opportunities, assessments of changes in warning capabilities, applications of new informational techniques to warning problems, research into enemy military doctrine, strategic thinking, plans and innovations, post-mortems of crises and maneuvers, reaction patterns to update understandings of enemy behavior, and studies and reviews of evidence to establish longer-term trends as background for evaluating current developments. These research and analysis efforts are basic investments to improve the future capabilities of the warning system we have. To the degree that the weekly cycle preempts their accomplishment, the rate of growth of the warning system is diminished, and its ability to take advantage of new technical developments or to consolidate a base for future demands is impaired.

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I-25. A sharp dilemma confronts any effort to determine the proper focus of effort in the analysis functions of the Watch Committee and particularly the NIC. On the one hand, the increasing complexity, the shrinking warning time and the growing difficulty of the problem of dealing with enemy intentions, particularly in terms of surprise attack, argue for single-minded concentration of resources against this task, simply because of the magnitude of the consequences of neglect, oversight or error. On the other hand, this problem of enemy hostile intentions does not confront us very often in real life; we are not on the brink of war every week, and enemy intentions remain to be dealt with in peripheral situations and lesser crises than those of ultimate war. For this variant of the warning task, we need a flexible, far-ranging process on a community basis such as we have in the usual operations of the Watch Committee and the NIC. It must be admitted that the frequent practice in dealing with lesser flaps keeps the mechanism in shape to deal with greater ones when necessary. As long as the Watch Committee and USIB function as they do, as long as USIB wishes the Watch Committee to concern itself with the variety of threats it now does, and as long as the weekly cycle occupies as much of NIC's time and energy as it does, this dilemma will persist.

Possible Remedies

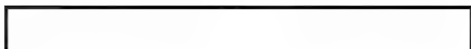
I-26. Another basic ambiguity exists in NIC's role of supporting the Watch Committee as a whole while individual members of the Committee are supported by current intelligence analysts in their own shops. NIC's perusal of the flow of current information through its special point of view, scouting for evidence of hostile enemy intentions, can lead it to make interpretations of developments at variance with those of current analysts. Be propinquity, familiarity, departmental loyalty, and often just the force of reason, the current analyst's views move upward to become official departmental positions, while NIC analysts' views remain those of a committee staff, a considerably inferior standing. And yet NIC analysts in many cases offer considerably longer intelligence experience and greater concentration on Watch Committee problems than do departmental analysts.

I-27. Two major changes might relieve this situation: one would be a sharper delineation of responsibilities between NIC and current intelligence contributors for coverage of various developments of current concern to the Watch Committee; the other would be to strengthen the substantive professionalism of the NIC in warning matters through establishing a small research component in NIC.



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I-28. NIC should be assigned primary responsibility for coverage and reporting on indications of hostile readying in the USSR, China, Vietnam and any other area of active military confrontation between Communist powers and the US and its allies. Departmental current shops could continue to make contributions on those indications subjects but should take primary responsibility for political and economic inputs and for peripheral situations of political confrontation. Departmental publications will have dealt with these topics already, and departmental contributions to the Watch Report are for the most part rewrites of those current publication items. NIC's nine analysts could then concentrate on problems closer to the core of their mission.

I-29. At the same time, NIC's ability to speak authoritatively and from sound research on subjects central to its responsibilities could be enhanced through the work of a research element. A research component of NIC could undertake a needed rethinking of the whole indications system and a re-evaluation of the indicators now relied on. It could generate new indicators through fully wringing out all the lessons to be learned from Soviet actions during crises, major maneuvers and internal checkouts of systems and procedures. It could redefine the collection requirements on the collection systems discussed above and explore the potentials for warning in new systems still under development. It could monitor the effectiveness of field collection activities in the warning area and recommend improvements or crisis procedures for collection. It could assist in developing an ADP system truly responsive to warning analysis needs (the lack of a real warning research and analysis effort up to now is one of the main reasons for the lag in using ADP techniques in the warning effort). It could capitalize on ADP efforts elsewhere in the warning and general intelligence communities, making its own ADP system a secondary, assimilative one. It could begin at last on depth studies of Soviet military doctrines, readying processes, estimates of the conduct of future wars, new weapons concepts, force deployments, patterns of resource allocation and methods of command and control. Working with other intelligence depth research components and outside research facilities, it could reach further than has ever been possible toward concentrating in NIC a fully developed body of information on the changing shape of war and its various crisis sub-states and developing a more comprehensive set of concepts of the situations it, as a warning mechanism, may have to confront. The effects of this sort of effort on the current evaluation and judgment roles of the NIC and the Watch Committee would be great.



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Some Other Ideas for Warning Research

I-30. A selective chronology is a most useful aid to analysis, particularly in any efforts to discern trends or rates of change. Plenty of partial or confusingly total chronologies can be found, not always current enough or focussed on what is needed for indications purposes. A useful chronology could be generated by machine processes listing events selected by analysts from the take arranged under headings such as Soviet--ChiCom--Neutral--Tactical--Western--US. Such a listing, which should be all-source and open to back-filling as later information on earlier events comes in, would form an effective framework for tracing the interactions among the forces at work world-wide or in specific situations or crises. It would provide a meaningful point of entry for information on US operations, deployments, political moves and international initiatives made available to NIC under NSAM 226. It would provide the outline or take-off points for more detailed study of specific periods, maneuvers, tensions, and trends. It would serve as a far more accurate setting for later learned events than the memory of an analyst or two. And it would provide a flexible general-purpose continuity transcending the turnovers of analyst personnel and the vagaries of enforced concentration on one area or problem at the expense of others.

I-31. Chronologies such as this have been started, maintained and dropped a number of times in NIC and elsewhere, but up to now they have been handcrafted operations requiring inordinate amounts of analyst time. Now that machine methods are becoming more accessible, another, more sophisticated try should be made. With a little coaching, primary selection of events to enter the chronology could be performed by the Watch Alert officers around the clock, backstopped or amplified by selections by analysts from their reading. With a few modifications in procedure it would be possible to supplement the general chronology framework with specifically tailored, more detailed listings for a given analyst or researcher engaged in some depth research. Experience with such an aid would soon reveal many additional applications, provided the basic structure was open and flexible enough. Much of what is now only in the capacious memories of a few analysts could be made available for a wider set of uses. Earlier segments could be filled in as research is carried on in those time frames; a chronology need not be complete back to Methuselah to be useful.

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I-32. Closely related to chronologies--and indeed in greater or lesser part derivative therefrom--are the familiar aids called Summaries of Indications. At present these are usually generated by-hand ad hoc by one or two NIC analysts in connection with a present or threatening crisis. Many times they are after-the-fact, retrospective selections of signs, some of which were noted at the time, which pointed to the situation at hand. Even so, they can be useful, particularly at the start of a flap, and, maintained during it, serve to provide a common base of evidence for discussions in the Watch Committee or with involved analysts elsewhere. There should be more of these more often. At the moment Vietnam and possible Chinese involvement are probably adequately documented, but concurrent summaries of indications for the general Soviet military posture and for activities around Berlin might be useful precautions to take. Then, too, a longer-term summary might be begun for Thailand.

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I-38. All the foregoing suggestions are illustrative of the sort of investment in expanded capability that could flow from the addition of enough people in a research cadre or as current analysts to ease the confining, inhibiting effects of the weekly cycle. All these ideas would have benefits to NIC, the Committee and the warning effort in improving the substantive base, the methodological sophistication and the operating experience of the indications community.

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ANNEX J

Judgment and the Watch Committee

J-1. The judgment process is the last step in the warning sequence before reaching the ultimate users. At this stage meaning is derived from evidence, and insight into intentions is gained from study of enemy patterns and trends, enemy philosophy and practice and the whole panorama of the current situation. Judgment is exercised, of course, at every step of the way, from collection on, in the choices of information sought, acquired, selected out and passed upward. The judgment discussed here is of a different order; it is aimed at deriving more from the information and selections than those elements represent by themselves; it is fundamentally an intellectual process, the character and quality of which will vary greatly with the individuals involved, depending on background, experience, knowledge and basic set of mind.

J-2. The judgment process in the context of warning is constrained and complicated by a number of factors. Working against time and the unknowable future, these warning judgments will be subject to uncertainty and inexactness. Dealing with some of the most serious problems of our times, these judgments will be understandably hesitant, fearful of being misread and inclined to cautious and sometimes oblique phrasing. Reissued week after week, these judgments are caught between the slowness of most big developments and the need at shorter intervals to find some new way to reflect the small changes taking place in situations. Based on less than perfect information, these judgments are often stretched and strained to include a variety of views and, seeking an agreeable or unanimous construction, can end by being less candid and informative than if a dissent were forced.

Recognition of Indications

J-3. The step of recognition and selection of an item as a possible indication can be regarded as the start of this judgment process. Here is where "feel" and experience and long exposure to the take are of primary importance. We can see no substitute for continuity and depth in recognizing the potential relationship, however tenuous, of a given event or fact to a trend or pattern of enemy behavior with warning implications.

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J-4. The analyst carries in his mind, consciously or not, a set of hypotheses about what is going on in his area of responsibility and he reads the take with those hypotheses as a frame of reference for the facts he learns. His objective is to fill in as completely as possible the "picture" of what the enemy is up to and to predict, guess or speculate about what the enemy is going to do next. He is therefore extra-sensitive to evidence of change or signs of a new departure or course of action. The option of considering an item a possible indication needs to be preserved until contrary evidence clearly persuades otherwise. To reject indications one by one for lack of corroborative evidence when all those so rejected could themselves add up to prove the case is a trap to guard against. The indications analyst has the responsibility at this stage to keep those possible indications alive and unforgotten and to raise them for re-examination from time to time.

J-5. The accuracy and sensitivity of this selection process depend on having available in the NIC all the information that might even remotely bear on the matter of enemy intentions. Concern that this be so has been expressed at the highest levels ever since the NIC was established. NSC 5438 of 30 November 1954 required that all appropriate departments and agencies make fully available to the Watch Committee of USIB all information and intelligence pertinent to its mission without restriction because of source, policy or operational sensitivity. The National Security Council also required that the Watch Committee be kept informed of significant diplomatic, political, military and other courses of action by the US which might bring about military reaction or early hostile action by the USSR. In 1963, NSC 5438 was superseded [redacted] signed by President Kennedy, which reinforced the language of the earlier directive and directed that such information should be sent to the Director, NIC, at the Pentagon, or, in cases of exceptional sensitivity, to the Chairman of the Watch Committee in care of the Director, NIC.

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J-6. Notwithstanding the presidential source of these directives, the intelligence agencies, consciously or unconsciously, have tended to withhold sensitive substantive information from the multi-agency NIC even when that information clearly bore on the central warning responsibilities of that staff. Over the past several years, NIC's access to US operational information has improved, but largely because of a general easing of restrictions on such information. The importance of operational information in the formulation of NIC and Watch Committee judgments is self-evident. The NIC must know that certain US actions are underway or planned for early execution;

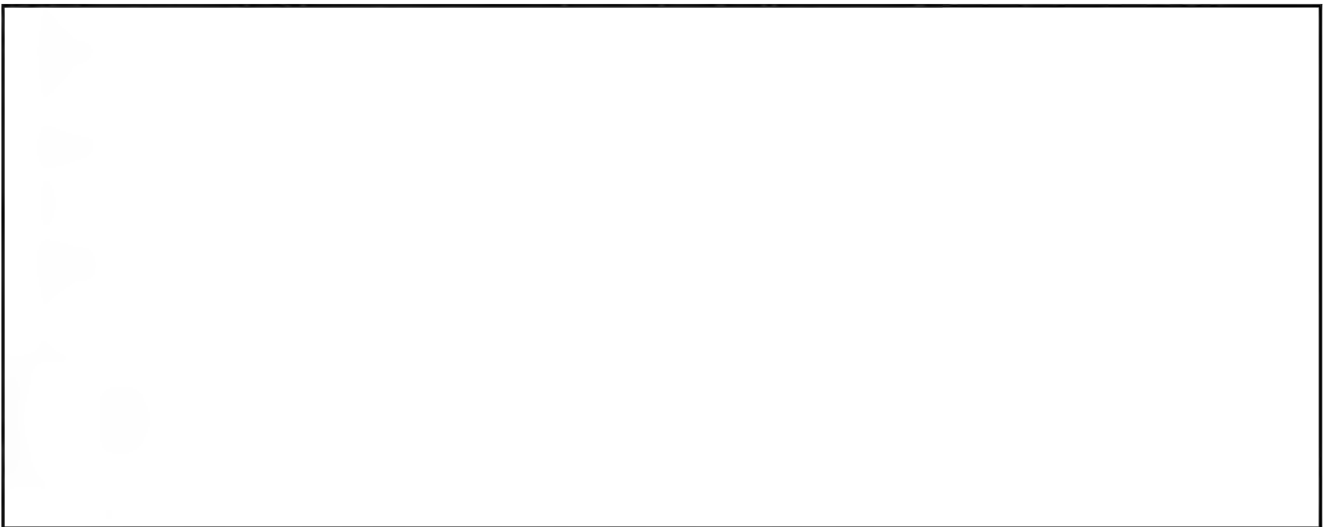
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These might well be the explanation and cause of Soviet reactions which the NIC might otherwise misinterpret as hostile preparations. Moreover, knowledge of US activities is essential to an understanding of how the Soviets may be viewing the development of a situation and planning their countermoves, thus helping to clarify the always uncertain matter of Soviet motives and intentions.

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Some Possible Changes in Watch Committee Procedure

J-8. Despite changes since 1954 in the style, emphasis and substantive focus of the Watch Committee's activities and despite revisions in the intelligence community's structure, relationships and underlying concepts, many elements of Watch Committee operations remain essentially as they were set up twelve years ago. Committee meetings are still held on a weekly schedule; submissions from the agencies are still essentially rewrites of current publication items; the language and content of the Committee's conclusions and Report are still determined on the principle of unanimity; and the Report is extensively coordinated, perhaps more than any other community publication, before USIB blesses it for forwarding to the NSC. We would recommend that these well-rooted procedures be reviewed by the Watch Committee itself to see if they need to be modernized to fit the present world situations.

J-9. We propose as possible changes to consider:

- a) that the Watch Committee's Charter be interpreted to pass those situations in which Soviet or Chinese activities are prospective or actual conflict with US interests;

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b) that the Committee meet at less frequent intervals-- monthly, with the option for more frequent meetings as circumstances warrant;

c) that the Committee Report address itself more to measuring changes and directions in the situations it covers rather than to rewriting recent current publications;

d) that the NIC's contribution address itself fundamentally to an accounting of the indications present in those situations; and

e) that the Committee be charged to arrive at an assessment as to the prospects in the conflicts it is "watching".

J-10. These changes would go far toward transforming the Committee into a mechanism more in tune with the polycentric, multilateral equations of forces of the present. The Committee would then respond more to the needs expressed by State and others for an instrumentality covering not only warning of Soviet attack but also Chinese intentions (as is now being done for Vietnam) and other potential major crises affecting US security interests.

J-11. The greater interval between Watch Committee meetings and reports would take into account that most situations of Watch Committee concern advance at a pace requiring longer intervals than a week for perception of change and direction. A real constraint on the Committee has been the need to find something new and valid to say each week about situations that have changed relatively little since last being reported on. The old jurisdictional sensitivity over the boundaries between the Watch Committee's conclusions and National Estimates has diminished with time; the Committee has been making limited estimates anyway as required. A recognized role of making short-term estimates about potential conflict situations would fill a gap not now covered by programs of National Estimates and would create a flexible procedure for crisis needs at shorter intervals.

J-12. The longer reporting interval would preclude contributions from the agencies being simply remakes of current items and would encourage regular reappraisals by current analysts and the NIC of trends and advances of developments under review. The implicit competition between current publications and the Watch Report would be reduced with each filling a unique role. Discussions of indications NIC would have the benefit of a longer period in which more indications might be observed and about which conclusions might be

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clearer. And the readers would have available a useful review and perspective on important events underlying their active concerns of the moment.

J-13. While there is no reason why USIB should not, if it wished, continue to endorse the Watch Report, there would seem to be no more need for USIB to approve the Report than to approve the publications of JAEIC, GMAIC, EIC or SIC. In any case, members of the Watch Committee would surely seek the approval of their principals on the final text of the Watch Report.

J-14. In any new form of the Watch Report, we hope that room can be made for dissents and differences of view. The quality of our evidence, the divergences in attitudes among participating agencies, and the honest differences of opinion among men conduce to useful dissents. It is wrong to suppose that all events will hold the same meaning for all students of them; their description and evaluation should not be watered down just to further the somewhat empty virtue of unanimity. National Estimates contain dissents without diluting their value; the Watch Report should too. The fact that only one or two dissents have been recorded in the Watch Report in the past three years may reflect not universal agreement but only that no one felt that the Watch Report language, after editorial blending at the Committee table, was worth arguing about.*

J-15. The monthly Watch Committee interval proposed here would materially reduce the load on the NIC, providing more time for work with its research component into deeper studies of events and patterns than has ever been possible under the weekly cycle. We propose that NIC be encouraged to publish trend analyses, doctrine studies, etc., pertinent to the Committee's mission. These and summaries of recent indications in current situations could be published by the NIC in the month's interval to maintain continuity on the outlines and underlying trends with which the Committee would deal. Such round-ups and reviews would then be ready to hand if the situations warmed up and required earlier and more frequent meetings.

*Rider 14: The temptation is irresistible for the lawyer to add that some of the finest reasoning, and often the basis for future decisions, of the United States Supreme Court in the last sixty years has first appeared in the dissenting opinions.

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Crisis Management and the Watch Process

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that if the intelligence community is to remain relevant to national demands, it will have to revise its procedures and create new means to stay in step with this new world of speedy news and urgent calls for action, both in evaluating the significance of the development and in orchestrating action by collection assets to obtain more information. At present we have a significant imbalance between the speed of receipt of new crisis information and the ability to evaluate it and respond with action to follow-up on it.

J-18. Organizationally, one major response to this new high-speed situation has been the creation of larger Operations Centers--the NMCC for the JCS, expanded Operations Centers in CIA and State and the NSA Command Center--with up-to-the-minute intelligence and US operations information coming in and being displayed at all times around the clock. The role of the Watch Committee and the NIC in this quick-reaction environment needs careful study. Our recommendation for a longer interval between Committee meetings and more emphasis on careful trend analysis and on evaluated summaries of indications by NIC is not inconsistent with the needs of quick-response machinery; on the contrary, these tasks and procedures we believe will enhance the ability of the warning mechanisms to react to urgent situations.

J-19. Under these recommendations for modernizing the Watch process, we would have a Watch Committee more concerned with formulating regular short-term estimates of situations of concern to policy

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makers. Those estimates and projections would be under constant review and monitoring by both the current intelligence and NIC organizations. The NIC, freed from the demands of a weekly cycle, could become through its research even more perceptive and knowledgeable of indications of real meaning to warning and, working with current intelligence, could be prepared at all times to support the Watch Committee with warning evaluations of crisis situations. In short, we would have a dual-capacity Watch Committee and NIC, able to deal with longer-term trends and currents in situations of strategic significance while also able to respond promptly and expertly to rapidly developing crises and to the needs of policy makers and their quick-response mechanisms.

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